

RE: Councilor Orders #7 & #9 (March 30, 2015)

Patrick W Barrett III <jbrealtyllc@gmail.com>

Sun 3/29/2015 11:16 AM

City Clerk Agenda

To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>;

Cc: Lopez, Donna <dlopez@cambridgema.gov>;

Dear Mayor Maher, Vice Mayor Benzan, and Honorable City Council,

I hope this letter finds you all healthy, happy, and warming. I am writing to address two policy orders that will be coming up this Monday March 30, 2015 that have me a bit concerned.

The first being Vice Mayor Benzan's order to the City Manager that he confer with local business associations and neighborhood groups to prompt clean up initiatives. I hope the Vice Mayor will be delighted to discover that several such initiatives are already underway, with Central Square's clean up slated for May 13th. I also know that Kendall Square has a date for theirs and several other associations, neighborhood groups, are already at work putting together their annual or biannual clean up dates. However the issue that concerns me is that this information is readily accessible to all who wish to know it. One simply has to reach out to any group in the city to find out what they are up to. I do not think the City Manager need be bothered with such trivialities, and in fact would encourage much greater City Councilor participation and engagement with these events, and many of you and your colleagues have participated. The "door" to any of these groups is always open to the Council and I hope to see you all in May as I'm sure the other groups and associations look forward to your support as well. To that end I would also like to add that the DPW has done an exemplary job handling the past two months and Owen O'Riordan, John Nardone, and their team should be praised for the great job they have done.

The second item I'd like to address is Councilor Kelley, Carlone, and Mazen's order regarding the economic study on C2. Several groups have been asking for this study for some time now so I would say it is probably well overdue. However, I would offer a few words of caution. Over the past several years it has occurred to me that this city is not a city of action, but of study. Wherein the study itself has become the action. Like the Red Ribbon Commission study; *Central Squared*, or the C2 study that followed with zero forward movement by this council or the preceding, I can't help but wonder if the "study" is simply a means to discover a reason why something shouldn't be done. I do not recall wide participation in either the Red Ribbon or C2 by any of these councilors, and while I am sure their intent is to ensure a more vibrant Central Square, I can't help but be concerned that this isn't a search for cover or something to point to that will assist in the perpetuated apathy this Council and the preceding councils have had toward Central Square. The recent linkage study is a great example of why my concern is so great. It was written as if with blinders to the complexities of development and is now being used as talking point nonsense by those who would keep Cambridge preserved in amber. I hope that in your rejuvenated focus on Central Square that this economic study serves to inform an opinion and doesn't simply become the foundation for having one; regardless of what it says. There will be no correct answer this or any study you commission can give you. One has only to look out upon Central Square to realize that something must be done. I look forward to a

robust discussion on both this study and the continued debate on the Normandy proposal. However, I urge these councilors and the Council as a whole to recognize that the time for study is nearing a conclusion and now is the time for action.

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